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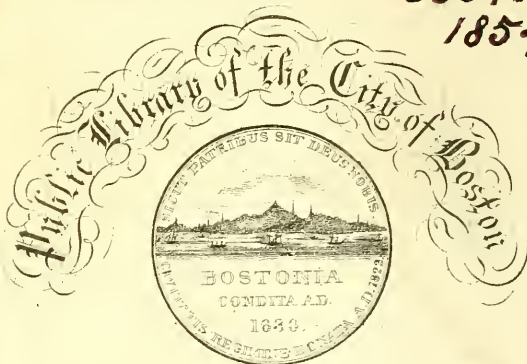


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City Document—No. 10.

REPORT
OF THE
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
FINANCE
ON THE
ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS.



ROXBURY:
NORFOLK COUNTY JOURNAL PRESS.
1854.

CITY OF ROXBURY.

IN COMMON COUNCIL, March 6, 1854.

ORDERED, That the Committee on Finance be and they hereby are instructed to confer with the several Joint Standing Committees of the City Council, relative to the necessary sums of money to be raised for the expenses of the City for the fiscal year ending the 30th April, 1855, and report thereon the Annual Appropriation Bill, as soon as practicable.

Passed and sent up for concurrence.

JOSHUA SEAVER, Clerk.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, March 6, 1854.

Concurred.

JOSEPH W. TUCKER, City Clerk.

[NOTE.—This Report was accidentally omitted to be printed in April, which accounts for its being numbered City Doc. No. 10.]

CITY OF ROXBURY.

IN COMMON COUNCIL, April 17, 1854.

THE Joint Standing Committee on Finance, who were instructed, under an order originating in the Common Council, March 6th, to confer with the several Joint Standing Committees of the City Council, relative to the necessary sums of money to be raised for the expenses of the City, for the fiscal year ending April 30th, 1855, and report the annual appropriation order as soon as practicable, have attended to the duty assigned them, and submit the following

REPORT AND ORDERS.

For Schools.

For pay of School Teachers, .	\$19,725 00	
“ Fuel for Schools, . . .	1,500 00	
“ Contingencies, . . .	5,500 00	
“ Roxbury Grammar School, (for High School,) . . .	3,000 00	
“ New School House, . . .	5,000 00	
	<hr/>	\$34,725 00

For Support of Poor.

For Support of Poor, in addition to their earnings, . . .	\$3,000 00	
	<hr/>	\$3,000 00

Fire Department.

Pay of Chief Engineer, . . .	\$200 00	
“ Assistant Engineers, . . .	160 00	
“ Secretary of the Board, . .	15 00	
	<hr/>	\$375 00
Engine No. 1. Pay of Foreman, .	\$35 00	
“ Clerk, . . .	35 00	
“ Steward, . . .	75 00	
“ 38 Men, \$25 . . .	950 00	
	<hr/>	1,095 00
Engine No. 2. Pay of Foreman, .	\$35 00	
“ Clerk, . . .	35 00	
“ Steward, . . .	75 00	
“ 38 Men, \$25 . . .	950 00	
	<hr/>	1,095 00
Engine No. 6. Pay of Foreman, .	\$35 00	
“ Clerk, . . .	35 00	
“ Steward, . . .	75 00	
“ 38 Men, \$25 . . .	950 00	
	<hr/>	1,095 00
Engine No. 7. Pay of Foreman, .	\$35 00	
“ Clerk, . . .	35 00	
“ Steward, . . .	75 00	
“ 38 Men, \$25 . . .	950 00	
	<hr/>	1,095 00
Hook and } Pay of Foreman, .	\$35 00	
Ladder Co. }	“ Clerk, . . .	30 00
	“ Steward, . . .	25 00
	“ 18 Men, \$25 . . .	450 00
	<hr/>	540 00
Hose Co. Pay of Foreman, .	\$35 00	
“ Clerk, . . .	30 00	
“ Steward, . . .	50 00	
“ 10 Men, \$25 . . .	250 00	
	<hr/>	365 00
		<hr/>
		\$5,660 00
Contingencies,		2,500 00
		<hr/>
		\$8,160 00

City Debt and Interest.

For Payment of Interest on Debt, . . . \$11,000 00

Watch and Police.

For Pay of Watch and Police, . . . \$5,000 00

Salaries for City Officers.

For Salary of Mayor, . . .	\$800 00	
City Clerk, . . .	900 00	
Clerk of Com. Council, . . .	150 00	
Treas. and Collector, . . .	1200 00	
Assessors, . . .	525 00	
Clerk to Assessors, . . .	75 00	
Five Ass't Assessors, . . .	100 00	
City Messenger, . . .	275 00	
	<hr/>	\$4,025 00

Highways, Bridges and Sidewalks.

For Highways, Bridges and Sidewalks, . . \$10,000 00

Discount on Taxes.

For Discount on Taxes, . . . \$3,500 00

For Abatement of Taxes, . . . \$1,200 00

Gas, Oil, Lighting and Repairs of Lamps.

For Gas, Oil, Lighting and Repairs of Lamps, \$3,000 00

Overdrafts.

For Interest on Overdrafts, . . . \$500 00

Contingent Expenses.

For Contingent Expenses in addition to rents,
&c., from City Property, . . . \$3,000 00.

All which is respectfully submitted.

For the Committee,

LINUS B. COMINS, *Chairman.*

CITY OF ROXBURY.

AN ORDER, relating to the SPECIFIC APPROPRIATIONS for the Financial Year of 1854-55.

It is hereby ordered by the City Council, That to defray the EXPENDITURES of the City of Roxbury for the Financial Year, which will commence with the first day of May, 1854, and end with the last day of April, 1855, the following sums of money be, and the same are hereby respectively appropriated, viz :

FOR PAY OF SCHOOL TEACHERS,

Nineteen thousand seven hundred and twenty-five dollars. \$19,725 00

FUEL FOR SCHOOLS,

Fifteen hundred dollars. 1,500 00

CONTINGENCIES FOR SCHOOLS,

Five thousand five hundred dollars. 5,500 00

ROXBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL, (for
High School,)

Three thousand dollars. 3,000 00

NEW SCHOOL HOUSE,

Five thousand dollars. 5,000 00

SUPPORT OF POOR, in addition to their
earnings, and for repairs of Almshouse,

Three thousand dollars. 3,000 00

PAY OF MEMBERS OF THE FIRE DE-
PARTMENT,

Five thousand six hundred and sixty dollars. 5,660 00

Carried forward,

\$43,385 00

Brought forward,	\$43,385 00
CONTINGENT EXPENSES OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT,	
<i>Two thousand five hundred dollars.</i> . . .	2,500 00
CITY DEBT AND INTEREST,	
<i>Eleven thousand dollars.</i>	11,000 00
PAY OF WATCH AND POLICE,	
<i>Five thousand dollars.</i>	5,000 00
SALARIES OF CITY OFFICERS,	
<i>Four thousand twenty-five dollars.</i> . . .	4,025 00
REPAIRS OF HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES AND SIDEWALKS,	
<i>Ten thousand dollars.</i>	10,000 00
DISCOUNT ON TAXES,	
<i>Three thousand five hundred dollars.</i> . .	3,500 00
ABATEMENTS OF TAXES,	
<i>Twelve hundred dollars.</i>	1,200 00
GAS, OIL, LIGHTING AND REPAIRS OF LAMPS,	
<i>Three thousand dollars.</i>	3,000 00
INTEREST ON OVERDRAFTS,	
<i>Five hundred dollars.</i>	500 00
CONTINGENT EXPENSES, in addition to Rents, &c., from City Property,	
<i>Three thousand dollars.</i>	3,000 00
Making a total of eighty-seven thousand one hundred and ten dollars.	87,110 00

And it is further Ordered, That no excess in any of the respective appropriations aforesaid, shall be paid by the Treasurer, unless authorized by the City Council: *Provided, however,* that any sums of money which may be subscribed or contributed by individuals, to promote the object of any of the foregoing appropriations, and which form no part of the estimated income of the City, shall be strictly applied according to the intention of the contributors, and shall be credited to said appropriation accordingly.

CITY OF ROXBURY.

IN COMMON COUNCIL, April 17, 1854.

AN ORDER

Levying a TAX to defray the expenses of the City of Roxbury, for the Financial Year, which will commence with the first day of May, 1854, and end with the last day of April, 1855.

Ordered, That the sum of EIGHTY-SEVEN THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND TEN DOLLARS, be raised by assessment on the Polls and Estates of the inhabitants of this City, according to law, to pay the current expenses of the City of Roxbury, during the Financial Year, which will commence with the first day of May, 1854, and close with the last day of April, 1855.

Passed and sent up for concurrence.

JOSHUA SEAVER, *Clerk*.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, April 17, 1854.

Concurred.

JOSEPH W. TUCKER, *City Clerk*.

A

M E M O I R

OF

DR. NATHANIEL SHEPHERD PRENTISS,

OF

ROXBURY.



ROXBURY:

NORFOLK COUNTY JOURNAL PRESS.

1854.

NOTE.—In preparing the following memoir free use was made, by permission, of a manuscript copy of a beautiful and touching sermon preached at the funeral, by Rev. A. C. Thompson of the Eliot Congregational Church, Roxbury; a highly appropriate speech before the Roxbury City Council by Joseph N. Brewer, Esq., on introducing commemorative Resolutions; and manuscript memoranda by Rev. Joseph Banvard; in addition to my own memoranda and personal recollections of the good old man and revered friend. Prepared originally for another purpose, it is now printed to gratify many friends of the deceased, who having read the manuscript expressed a wish to possess a copy.

B. E. C.

MEMOIR.

DR. PRENTISS was born in North Cambridge, then a part of Charlestown, August 7th, 1766, ten years before the Declaration of Independence. The house wherein he was born, since and for many years known as "Davenport's Tavern," is still standing, though somewhat remodeled, nearly opposite the present Cattle Market Hotel. His father was one of the band, who, disguised as Indians, destroyed the obnoxious tea in Boston Harbor in the dawn of the Revolution—then an important secret which the lad came very near disclosing by calling his mother's attention, quite early the next morning, to the *tobacco* with which his father's boots were filled. Young Prentiss saw the British reinforcements as they marched to Lexington; and remembered that it was a hot day, and that the season was remarkably forward from having seen the soldiers ornament their muskets with cherry blossoms from the trees then in full bloom. Swinging on the gate while the troops halted to drink at his father's well, he had a full and near view of Lord Percy, of whose appearance and bearing he was accustomed in after life to give graphic and glowing descriptions.

On their retreat he saw one of the British shot down by a neighbor. The soldier, stopping for plunder, had fallen somewhat in the rear of his company. Perceiving his danger he raised his musket to fire upon his antagonist, but was too late. His body was thrown over the wall, and was an

object of fearful curiosity during the remainder of the day. As more troops were rapidly approaching, young Prentiss with the other children was hurried by their mother to the cellar of a house at some distance, to protect them from the shots which were poured by retreating parties into the houses by the road-side. In the great anxiety and distress of the mother, and the confusion incident to their situation, for many families were there collected, he soon found an opportunity to escape unnoticed, and, returning to the road, posted himself on the wall in the hope of hearing from or seeing his father, who had early in the day joined his company in pursuit of the enemy. Repeatedly urged, by friends hurrying by, to leave a place of so much danger, he obstinately refused until some one coming up assured him that his father had been recently seen alive and well. Overjoyed with the intelligence he hastened back to the cellar, to carry the good news to his mother, whose agonising suspense was becoming almost too great for human endurance.

Dr. Prentiss was quite feeble and delicate in early life. His parents therefore thought it best that he should not be trained to any calling that would require much physical energy and strength. As he was naturally fond of books he was encouraged to follow his inclinations in that particular. When quite a lad he constructed for himself a study in an old carriage-body lying neglected at the bottom of his father's garden, and fitted it up with book-shelf, desk, chair and fire-place. There he was accustomed to retire for reading and study. At school he was distinguished for correct deportment, faithful application, and facility of acquisition. An anecdote of him at this period may be related, as it is illustrative of the times. His teacher, who was somewhat of a military man, had a "corps of honor" in his school, embracing none but boys of the best scholarship and deportment. This class he was accustomed to exercise in military manœuvres as a matter of amusement. To this corps Prentiss belonged. Some friend fitted him out with a neat

wooden musket and other accoutrements, and, as he was an apt scholar, he soon acquired a practical knowledge of the manual exercise. A few days before the battle of Bunker's Hill, some raw recruits, who had been hastily collected from their farms and workshops, were assembled at Cambridge for the purpose of being drilled. Perfectly ignorant of military matters, they were exceedingly awkward in going through the exercises. Young Prentiss was present. He had taken a position some little distance one side of the men; and every order, given by the officer, he correctly obeyed. The captain seeing this, said to him—

"Come here, my lad." He approached.

"Do you understand the word of command?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let me see;—order arms!" down went the little soldier's gun.

"Shoulder arms!" up it went in true military style.

"Present arms!" in a flash it was held in the proper position.

The examination proving entirely satisfactory, the captain placed the little fellow in front of the company of recruits, and told them to look at him, and make every motion just as he did and there would be no mistake. He then proceeded with his drill—the little, delicate, white-haired, blue-eyed boy acting as fudge-man.

Dr. Prentiss was prepared for college by Dr. Kendall, principal of the public school in his native town. He entered Harvard University at the age of sixteen, in the class of John Quincy Adams, Judges Cranch and Putnam, and graduated in 1787.

After leaving college, he taught school in Medford for two years, at the same time pursuing the study of medicine with Dr. Putnam. He then went to Marlborough, where he remained about six months; thence to Lancaster, where he took charge of a school, and at the same time continued his medical studies under the instruction of Dr. Israel Atherton, an eminent physician of that day.

After completing his engagements in Lancaster, Dr. Prentiss returned to Marlborough; and in 1793 married Miss Abigail Perkins, a grand-daughter of Dr. Kennedy of Boston. He remained in Marlborough over ten years, keeping school and practising his profession.

While in practice in Marlborough he took an aversion to a neighboring physician of the name, and a relative, of the writer of this article. Dr. Prentiss was junior in the profession, and more recently settled in the place. The ill-feeling arose from some real or supposed desire on the part of his predecessor to exclude a new comer, and some misconstrued acts of unintentional opposition. Subsequently a fortuitous circumstance brought the two gentlemen together, and led to an explanation. Dr. Prentiss, in the spirit of true manliness and candor which characterized all his life, admitted his misconceptions, and proffered his friendship. He was met in a similar spirit. Mutual kindness and esteem followed, and ever after continued between them. The friendship and good-will thus engendered was bestowed in its full measure on the writer by Dr. Prentiss, on their introduction some twelve years since, and steadily maintained in increasing intensity to the very last hour of his consciousness.

In his practice Dr. Prentiss early inclined to a milder system of medication than was then usual, and was in consequence thought to be a timid practitioner by the indiscriminating, who considered severe dosing as an evidence of "heroic" practice. He was never a rash prescriber, as that term implies, having more faith in "old dame nature," as his phrase was, than in the large doses of medicine of some of his contemporaries. In this he was more truly "heroic" than those who pursued a more ostentatious and therefore perhaps more popular course.

He was admitted a member of the Mass. Medical Society in 1813; and his name was placed on the retired list in 1844.

By his mild deportment, soothing manners and indefatigable attention he won the affections of many families, who lamented his removal from the place of his earlier practice; and of many others who continued to seek his advice long after he had expressed a wish to retire from all professional service.

While preparing for his profession it had been necessary for him to teach school from prudential reasons. For this employment he was eminently qualified by nature and education. His preferences also led in this direction, so that when, in the autumn of 1801, he was invited to take charge of the "Grammar School" (now known as the English High and Latin Schools) in Roxbury, on his own terms, he accepted the offer and removed thither. The duties of this position he discharged with fidelity.

Among the distinguished men he educated, was one of the first and well-known missionaries to India, Rev. Samuel Newell. On one occasion Mr. Newell visited the Doctor when his house had been recently painted, and not being aware of that circumstance stepped upon the threshold of the parlor and left there the print of his foot. That footprint Dr. Prentiss would never allow to be painted over. He preserved it as a memento of the good man who made it.

Dr. Prentiss retained the office of Principal of the "Grammar School" for nine years. When he announced his resignation it caused quite an excitement among his pupils, by whom he was warmly loved. He soon after opened a private school, and many of them joined his classes. He was a strict disciplinarian for the times. One of his pupils recently related the following anecdote in one of the Western papers. "His patience at times would get nearly exhausted by the infractions of the school rules by the scholars. On one occasion, in rather a wrathful way, he threatened to punish with six blows of a very heavy ferule, the first boy detected in whispering, and appointed some as detectors. Shortly after, one of these detectors shouted,—'Master, John

Zeigler is whispering.' John was called up, and asked if it was a fact—(John, by the way, was a favorite both of the teacher and his schoolmates.) 'Yes,' answered John, 'I was not aware of what I was about. I was intent in working out a sum, and requested the one who sat next to reach the arithmetic that contained the rule, which I wished to see.' The Doctor regretted his hasty threat, but told John he could not suffer him to escape the punishment, and continued; 'I wish I could avoid it, but I cannot without a forfeiture of my word, and the consequent loss of my authority. I will,' continued he, 'leave it to any three scholars you may choose to say whether or not I omit the punishment.' John said he was agreed to that, and immediately called out G. S., T. D., and D. P. D. The Doctor told them to return a verdict, which they soon did, (after consultation,) as follows: 'The master's rule must be kept inviolate—John must receive the threatened punishment of six blows of the ferule; but it must be inflicted on volunteer proxies; and we, the arbitrators, will share the punishment by receiving two blows each.' John, who had listened to the verdict, stepped up to the Doctor, and with outstretched hand exclaimed: 'Master, here is my hand; they shan't be struck a blow; I will receive the punishment.' The Doctor, under pretence of wiping his face, shielded his eyes, and telling the boys to go to their seats, said he would think of it. I believe he did think of it to his dying day, but the punishment was never inflicted."

On leaving the Grammar School he had partially resumed his practice. The next year he was chosen Selectman of the Town and Assessor, in which capacity he served five years. The three following years he was sent Representative to the State Legislature, and then declined renomination; though subsequently he once more accepted the office. In 1816 he was chosen Town Clerk, which office he held until the close of the town government in 1846—a period of thirty years.

When the city form of government was accepted he declined being a candidate for clerkship, saying that the records of the town were then in good order, and he did not wish to continue in office till from the infirmities of age he injured them. He was then *eighty* years old. He relinquished practice at the same time; and soon after, breaking up house-keeping, went to reside with his daughter, Mrs. Banvard.

"The duties of Town Clerk" (said Mr. Brewer) "he faithfully and acceptably performed to the entire satisfaction of all parties; and notwithstanding there were times when the spirit of party raged almost to madness, men of every political faith manifested their approbation of his services, by re-electing him yearly to that office by a nearly unanimous vote. The records of the town bear full and ample testimony, in their clear and beautiful penmanship, to his industry, and to the systematic, correct and methodical manner which characterized all his official acts.

"The last official act performed by him was to administer the oath of office to the first mayor of our city, on the first Monday of April, 1846; and for that purpose—though he had held a commission as Justice of the Peace for many years—he was qualified only a few days before, expressly to perform this service. There are some who remember well that occasion. It seemed to all there assembled to be qualified as members of the first City Council, that as the members of the old government were surrendering their commissions, the members of the new one were receiving their authority from apostolic hands."

* * * * "Dr. Prentiss was warmly attached to Roxbury. To the last he considered himself a citizen here, and exercised the rights of citizenship whenever opportunity offered and the state of his health permitted. Coming here in his early manhood, he grew up with the growth of Roxbury to the green old age of more than four score. When he entered the service of the town, its population numbered

a little more than three thousand souls, and when he closed that service it had increased to fourteen thousand. For more than forty years, as teacher and officer, he labored with zeal and energy in the local affairs of Roxbury, with a single eye towards the advancement of the best interests of the town, and the prosperity of its inhabitants. He was jealous of the rights and interests of Roxbury. Whenever those rights were invaded, or those interests adversely affected, by any local or other measure, either proposed or adopted, he felt it keenly and sensibly and was not backward in expressing his own convictions. He had no selfish traits of character—so say those who knew him best;—he had no ambition to gratify. Whatever offices or honors he received from his fellow-citizens, resulted from their own spontaneous action—their own voluntary offering, and never from any act, word or effort on his part. They had unlimited confidence in his wisdom, his integrity, his judgment, his prudence and his patriotism, whenever they committed their interests to his hands; for they knew that their confidence would never be abused or misused.”

Dr. Prentiss was a man of venerable appearance. His tall, robust and noble form, locks white as snow, and open, pleasant countenance, always attracted the attention of strangers. Being of an affectionate, cheerful disposition, eminently conscientious, ever disposed to do good unto others, a man of unyielding integrity, great firmness and devoted piety, he was universally respected by all who knew him.

He was twice married. By his first wife he had eight children, three of whom still survive him. In 1807 he married Miss Abigail Pico, of Boston, for his second wife, and outlived her more than twenty-five years.

“Seldom has the man lived,” said his pastor at the funeral, “even the man of advanced age, who had such an exulting apprehension of the sovereignty of Jehovah, of the rectitude and wisdom of the divine proceedings.”

* * * * "His name stands first on the list of those organized, nineteen years ago, into the Eliot Church, over whose inception and growth he watched, prayed and wept in exulting gratitude to the King of Zion. His later years were years of singular serenity, soothed and cheered by the ministrations of devoted daughters, and a beloved son-in-law, pastor of the church in whose place of worship we now attend his obsequies.

"Seldom has any one of equal age retained such freshness of the bodily senses and the faculties of the mind; but whatever slight mental infirmity may have been latterly apparent, the *vita vere vitalis* was in full vigor. Faith, hope and charity were stronger than ever. His vital union to Him who is the Vine, became a point of triumphant assurance. His last whispered words, as an affectionate sister wiped a tear from his eye, were, pointing upward—'no tears there!' and his last conscious act after the power of speech had ceased," (a *sign* agreed by him to be used if in the closing hour of life he could not speak,) "was, to lay one finger across another in token of the Cross of Christ, in which he gloried to the last."

The funeral services were observed in the Baptist Church in West Cambridge, on Monday, November 7th, 1853, and were attended by the City Government of Roxbury, by many of his former townsmen and friends, as well as a large assemblage from the neighborhood.

"Not many days before his death," (to quote again from Mr. Brewer's speech,) "a few of his former pupils made him a visit and presented to him a beautiful silver pitcher, and asked his acceptance of it as 'a pledge of their renewed and continued affection'—'an evidence that though many years had passed away, he had not been forgotten by them.' The occasion was a solemn and impressive one to all present. They told him they had appreciated his kindness and indefatigable endeavors in directing their young minds to the rudiments of human learning, and instilling into their



hearts those moral influences under which his own long life had been rendered so serene and happy.' Their venerable master accepted the unexpected gift with feelings and emotions not easily described. He *felt* the kindness and affection that prompted the act. His heart was full to overflowing—too full for utterance. The 'tender place,' as he expressed it, was then as susceptible as in his youth.

"From this time he declined rapidly, and it was evident that the sands of life had nearly run out. He breathed his last on the evening of Saturday, Nov. 5th, 1853.

" 'Of no distemper, of no blast he died;
But fell like autumn fruit, that mellowed long.' "







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CITY OF BOSTON.

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